

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /048 W
-----039694 262353Z /41

O 261800Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 187
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL GENOA
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
AMCONSUL PALERMO
AMCONSUL TRIESTE POUCH
AMCONSUL TURIN POUCH

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT PARA 5, 6 AND 7)

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: BERLINGUER ADDRESSES PCI CENTRAL COMMITTEE

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) OPENED ON
IMPORTANT TWO DAY CENTRAL COMMITTEE (CC) SESSION I ROME
THE AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 26. PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL ENRICO
BERLINGUER GAVE THE LEAD SPEECH. FROM A LIMITED SUMMARY
OF THE FIRST PART OF THE SPEECH WHICH WE HAVE SEEN, IT
APPEARS THAT THE PCI IS STILL INSISTING ON THE FORMATION
OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY. WHILE INDICATING
THAT THE PCI HAS NOT FORMALLY PROPOSED THE IDEA OF THE
FORMATION OF A GOVERNING MAJORITY EXCLUDING THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS (DC), BERLINGUER SETS FORTH THE HYPOTHESIS REPEAT
HYPOTHESIS OF THE CREATION OF AN EVENTUAL GOVERNMENT BY THE
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PARTIES WHICH HAVE REQUESTED A CHANGE IN THE NATION'S
POLITICAL FRAMEWORK. END SUMMARY.

1. ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY SECRETARY GENERAL ENRICO
BERLINGUER PRESENTED THE OPENING SPEECH AT A PARTY CENTRAL
COMMITTEE MEETING WHICH GOT UNDERWAY IN ROME LATE IN THE
AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 26. THE FULL TEXT OF HIS SPEECH WILL

ONLY BECOME AVAILABLE TO US WHEN PUBLISHED IN L'UNITA JANUARY 27, BUT ANSA, WHICH RECEIVED AN ADVANCE COPY OF THE SPEECH, HAS BEGUN TO RUN A SUMMARY OF IT. GIVEN WASHINGTON INTEREST IN THE SPEECH, WE ARE SETTING FORTH THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PORTION OF THE ANSA SUMMARY WHICH AS THUS FAR BEEN TRANSMITTED. OUR OWN SUMMARY OF THE SPEECH AND COMMENTS ON IT WILL BE SENT ONCE WE ARE ABLE TO SEE THE FULL TEXT.

2. IN HIS SPEECH, BERLINGUER REITERATED THE PCI'S CALL FOR A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, STTING IT IS DICTATED BY THE GRAVITY OF THE CRISIS FACING THE NATION. HE DESCRIBED THE PARTY'S POSITION AS SERIOUS, CLEAR, AND COMPREHENSIBLE. BERLINGUER DEFINED AS MISTAKEN, SOCIALIST PARTY SECRETARY CRAXI'S RECENT ASSERTION THAT A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY IS NOT NOW ATTAINABLE, GIVEN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY'S (DC) NEGATIVE STANCE. THE PCI LEADER ARGUES THAT CRAXI'S POSITION REPRESENTS A GIVEAWAY TO THE DC.

3. BERLINGUER SHARPLY CRITICIZED NOT ONLY THE DC'S NEGATIVE STAND TO THE IDEA OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, BUT ALSO ITS REFUSAL TO CONSIDER A CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE COUNTRY, THUS EXCLUDING THE PCI NOT ONLY FROM PARTICIPATION IN A GOVERNMENT BUT ALSO FROM AN EXPLICIT MAJORITY.

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4. ACCORDING TO BERLINGUER THE DC RIGIDITY, IF IT IS NOT FOLLOWED BY SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS, COULD WELL LEAD TO A DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT AND A NEW ELECTORAL CONFRONTATION WHICH WOULD BE DANGEROUS FOR THE COUNTRY. NOTING THAT THE COMMUNISTS, SOCIALISTS, REPUBLICANS, SOCIAL DEMOCRATS, AND LIBERALS HAVE STAED THAT THEY ARE AGAINST EARLY ELECTIONS, BERLINGUER SAID THERE ARE CONTRADICTORY SIGNS ON THIS SUBJECT FROM THE DC. WHILE DC LEADERS INDICATE THEY ARE OPPOSED TO EARLY ELECTIONS, STATEMENT FROM INDIVIDUALS SUGGEST THAT THERE ARE FORCES IN THE PARTY PUSHING FOR THEM.

5. RETURNING TO THE THEME OF A GOVERNMENT, BERLINGUER STRESSED THAT IT IS TIME THE DC DECIDES TO RECOGNIZE THE FACT THAT EVERY DEMOCRATIC AND CONSTITUTIONAL PARTY HAS EQUAL DIGNITY AND EQUAL RIGHT TO ARTICIPATE IN AN ITALIAN GOVERNMENT. BERLINGUER ADDED THAT IF THE DC RIGIDITY CONTINUES, THE RISK OF A DISSOLUTION OF THE PARLIAMENT BECOMES REAL. ALTERNATELY, TERE IS THE RISK OF A SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS WHICH WOULD BE EXPEDIENT, DELUDING, AND PIECEMEAL. SUCH A SOLUTION, HE ARGUED, COULD HARM THE COUNTRY'S PRESTIGE AND THE CREDIBILITY OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES.

6. BERLINGUER DENIED THAT THE PCI HAS THOUGHT OF A SOLUTION CONSISTING OF A GOVERNMENT INCLUDING THE LEFT AND THE LAY PARTIES (EXCLUDING THE DC) WHICH WOULD BE IN CONTRAST WITH THE QUOTE UNITARY LINE OF THE PARTY END QUOTE. HOWEVER, IN THE FACE OF THE WORSENING OF THE CRISIS OR A PROLONGED DC RIGIDITY, HE ARGUED, IT IS PROPER TO ADVANCE THE IDEA THAT THE DC SHOULD NOT OPPOSE AN ATTEMPT TO FORM A GOVERNMENT BY THOSE WHO TOOK THE INITIATIVE IN CALLING FOR A CHANGE IN THE NATION'S POLITICAL FRAMEWORK. SUCH A GOVERNMENT, HE ADDED, SHOULD HAVE A PROGRAM AGREED UPON BY ALL THE DEMOCRATIC PARTIES, AND IT COULD HAVE AN ELEMENT OF CONTROL IN ADDITION TO THAT NORMALLY EXERCISED BY THE PARLIAMENT. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE PCI WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPECT THE DC WOULD ASSUME A RESPONSIBLE ATTITUDE, SIMILAR TO THE TYPE WHICH THE PCI HAS EXERCISED SINCE JUNE 20, 1976. BERLINGUER STRESSED THAT WHAT HE WAS STATING WAS NOT A PROPOSAL BUT QUOTE A HYPOTHESIS END QUOTE, REITERATING THAT THE PARTY STILL HAS AS ITS PRINCIPAL OBJECTIVE THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY.

7. CONCERNING FOREIGN POLICY, BERLINGUER DESCRIBED THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S JANUARY 12 STATEMENT ON COMMUNIST PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENTS AS INADMISSIBLE INTERFERENCE IN ITALIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS. HE REMINDED HIS LISTENERS OF THE POSITIONS ASSUMED BY THE PCI IN THE SENATE AND CHAMBER OF DEPUTY FOREIGN POLICY DEBATES IN WHICH THERE DEVELOPED ON THE POLITICAL AND PARLIAMENTARY LEVELS NATIONAL AGREEMENT ON THE POSITIONS AND ACTIONS OF ITALY IN THE WORLD. GARDNER

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